

based that they believed glory might be attained in a war thus flagrantly and infamously unjust. The prevailing weakness of his own character also was betrayed in this display; no other successes were brought forward than those which had been won while he was in Spain; for though he liberally rewarded his generals in all ways, and left them also at full liberty to enrich themselves by exaction and plunder, he was jealous of any celebrity that they might attain, and desired, more from personal vanity than from political considerations, that in every success the French should look to him, and to him alone, as the author of their victories.

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While France was thus rejoicing in the triumphs of its armies, the Central Junta saw the whole extent of their danger, and rested their hopes upon the goodness of their cause and the character of the Spanish nation, with a composure which nothing could shake. Never was a nation more truly represented in its defects and in its virtues, in its strength and in its weakness. While in their administration they committed the same errors, deceiving themselves and others, which in former wars had rendered the Spaniards \* the most inefficient and impracticable of all allies; their language was that of the loftiest fortitude, and their public papers breathed a spirit worthy of their station. One of the most splendid of these orations was issued during the

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\* Burnet says of the wars in the reign of William III. "The late king told me that in these campaigns the Spaniards were both so ignorant and so backward, so proud and yet so weak, that they would never own their feebleness or their wants to him. They pretended they had stores when they had none; and thousands when they scarce had hundreds. He had in their councils often desired that they would give him only a true state of their garrisons and magazines; but they always gave it false; so that for some campaigns all was lost, merely because they deceived him in the strength they pretended they had. At last he believed nothing they said, but sent his own officers to examine every thing." Vol. ii. p. 7.

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*Address of  
the Central  
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nation.*

fearful pause after the defeat of their armies at Ocaña and at Alba de Tormes, when the peace with Austria left Buonaparte at leisure to direct his whole force against Spain. "Our enemies," said they, "exhort us to submit to the clemency of the conqueror. Because in their own degraded hearts they find nothing but baseness when they are weak, and atrocity when they are strong, they imagine that the Spaniards must abandon all their lofty hopes. Who has told them that our virtue is of so low a standard? Does fortune oppose to us greater obstacles? we will redouble our exertions! Are our dangers augmented? we shall acquire the greater glory! Slaves of Buonaparte, waste not time in sophistries which can deceive no one; speak frankly and say, we will be the most wicked of men, because we believe ourselves the most powerful: . . . this language is consistent and intelligible; but do not attempt to persuade us that the abandonment of our rights is wisdom, and that cowardice is prudence! Submit? . . . do these sophists know to what they advise the most high-minded nation upon earth? It would be a stain without example in our annals, if after such efforts, such incredible events, we were to fall at the feet of the crowned slave who has been sent to us as king. And for what? That from the midst of his banquets, his ruffian parasites, and his prostitutes, he may point out the churches which are to be burnt; the estates which are to be divided among his satellites; the virgins and matrons who are to be taken to his seraglio; the youths who are to be sent as the tribute to the Minotaur of France!

"Spaniards, think not that the Junta speak thus to excite you by the arts of language; what need of words, when things speak for themselves? Your houses are destroyed; your churches demolished; your fields laid waste; your families dispersed and wandering through the country, or hurried into the grave. Have we made so many sacrifices, have the flames of war con-

sumed half Spain, that we should abandon the other half to the far more deadly peace which the enemy prepares for it? For no one will beguile himself with the insidious parade of the improvements which the French hold out. The Tartar who commands them has decreed, that Spain shall have neither industry, nor commerce, nor population, nor political representation whatever: . . . to be made a waste and solitary sheep-walk for supplying French manufactures with our wools; to become a nursery of men who may be hurried away to slaughter; such is the destiny which he would impose upon the most highly favoured of all countries! Shall we then, submitting to this, submit also to the destruction of our religion; abandon the interests of heaven and the faith of our fathers to the sacrilegious mockery of these banditti; and forsake the sanctuary which, during seven centuries, and in a thousand and a thousand battles, our forefathers maintained against the Saracens? If we should do this, the victims who perished in that contest would cry to us from their graves, Ungrateful and perfidious race, shall our sacrifices be in vain, and is our blood of no estimation in your eyes? No, patriots! rest in peace, . . . and let not that bitter thought disturb the quiet of your sepulchres!

“ There is no peace, there can be none in this state of things! That Spain may be free, is the universal wish of the nation; and if that cannot be obtained, at least it may become one immense desert, one wide grave, where the accumulated remains of French and Spaniards may exhibit to future ages our glory and their shame. But fortune is not so inimical to virtue as to leave to its defenders only this melancholy termination. It is written in heaven, and the history of all ages attests the truth, that a people who decidedly love their liberty and independence must ultimately establish them, in despite of all the artifice and all the violence of tyranny. Victory, which is so often a

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gift of fortune, is sooner or later the reward of constancy. What defended the little republics of Greece from the barbarous invasion of Xerxes? What reconstructed the Capitol when it was almost destroyed by the Gauls? What preserved it from the mighty arms of Hannibal? What, in times nearer our own, protected the Swiss from German tyranny, and gave independence to Holland in spite of the power of our ancestors?

“Spaniards, the Junta announces to you frankly what has happened in the continent, because it would not have you ignorant for a moment of the new danger which threatens the country: they announce it in the confidence, that, instead of being dismayed, you will collect new strength, and show yourselves more worthy of the cause which you defend, and of the admiration of the universe: they announce it to you, because they know that the determination of the Spaniards is to be free at whatever cost; and all means however violent, all resources however extraordinary, all funds however privileged, must be called out to repel the enemy. The ship’s treasures must be thrown overboard to lighten her in the tempest and save her from shipwreck. Our country is sinking; . . strength, riches, life, wisdom, council, . . whatever we have is hers. The victory is ours, if we carry on to the end of our enterprise the sublime enthusiasm with which it began. The mass with which we must resist the enemy must be composed of the strength of all, and the sacrifices of all; and then what will it import that he pours upon us anew the legions which are now superfluous in Germany, or the swarm of conscripts which he is about to drag from France? We began the contest with 80,000 men less; he began it with 200,000 more. Let him replace them if he can; let him send or bring them to this region of death, as destructive to the oppressors as to the oppressed! Adding to the experience of two campaigns the strength of despair and of fury, we will give to their phalanxes of banditti

the same fate which their predecessors have experienced ; and the earth, fattened with their blood, shall return to us with usury the fruits of which they have deprived us ! Let the monarchs of the North, forgetful of what they are, and of what they are capable, submit to be the slaves of this new Tamerlane ; let them purchase at such a price the tranquillity of a moment, till it comes to their turn to be devoured ! What is this to us, who are a mighty people, and resolved to perish or to triumph ? Did we ask their consent when, twenty months ago, we raised our arms against the tyrant ? Did we not enter into the contest alone ? Did we not carry it on for a campaign alone ? . . . Nothing which is necessary for our defence is wanting. Our connexion is daily drawn closer with America, to whose assistance, as timely as it was generous, the mother country is deeply indebted, and on whose zeal and loyalty a great part of our hope is founded. The alliance which we have formed with Great Britain continues and will continue ; that nation has lavished for us its blood and its treasures, and is entitled to our gratitude and that of future ages. Let, then, intrigue, or fear, prevail with weak governments and misled cabinets ; let them, if they will, conclude treaties, illusory on the part of him who grants, and disgraceful on the part of those who accept them ; let them, if they will, relinquish the common cause of civilized nations, and inhumanly abandon their allies ! The Spanish people will stand alone and erect amid the ruins of the European continent. Here has been drawn, never to be sheathed, the sword of hatred against the execrable tyrant ; here is raised, never to be beaten down, the standard of independence and of justice ! Hasten to it, all ye in Europe who will not live under the abominable yoke ; ye who will not enter into a league with iniquity ; ye who are indignant at the fatal and cowardly desertion of these deluded princes, come to us ! here the valiant shall find opportunities of acquiring true honour ; the wise and

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CHAP. the virtuous shall obtain respect; the afflicted shall have an  
 XXVII. asylum. Our cause is the same; the same shall be our reward.  
 1810. Come! and, in despite of all the arts and all the power of this  
January. inhuman despot, we will render his star dim, and form for our-  
 selves our own destiny!"

Two things are remarkable in this paper; the total change, or rather restoration of public feeling, which must have been effected, before a Spanish government would hold up the resistance of the Dutch to Philip as a glorious example to the Spanish people; and the want of foresight and information in the Junta, who could not only rely upon the attachment of the colonies, but even venture to declare, that the hopes of the country rested in great measure upon them. But though the Spanish government deceived itself in looking for hope where none was to be found, and in its exaggerated opinion of its military strength, it was not mistaken in relying upon the national character, and that spirit of endurance which constituted its moral strength. Upon this it was, and upon the extent and nature of the Peninsula, that those persons who from the commencement looked on with unshaken confidence to the final expulsion of the invaders, founded their judgement. The Continent, notwithstanding its extent, fell under the yoke of France, because the spirit of the people was not such as to supply the want of magnanimity and of wisdom in their rulers: the Tyrolese were subdued notwithstanding their heroism, because, in so small a territory as the Tyrol, numbers, remorselessly employed, must necessarily overcome all resistance. But no force can be sufficient to conquer and keep in subjection a peninsula, containing about 170,000 square miles, and twelve millions of inhabitants, if the people carry resistance to the uttermost. Their armies may be defeated, their towns occupied, their fortresses taken, their villages burnt,.. but the country cannot be conquered while the spirit of the nation remains unsubdued.

*State of  
 public opi-  
 nion in  
 England.*

In Spain the mountains form a chain of fastnesses running through the whole Peninsula, and connecting all its provinces with each other. In such a country, therefore, when the war ceases to be carried on by army against army, and becomes the struggle of a nation against its oppressors, pursued incessantly by night and day, the soldier, no longer acting in large bodies, loses that confidence which discipline gives him; while the peasant, on the other hand, feels the whole advantage which the love of his country, and the desire of vengeance, and the sense of duty, and the approbation of his own heart, give to the individual in a contest between man and man. The character of the Spaniards was displayed in their annals. The circumstances of their country remained the same as when Henri IV. said of it, that it was a land wherein a weak army must be beaten, and a strong one starved. They who were neither ignorant of history nor of human nature considered these things; and therefore, from the commencement of the struggle, regarded it with unabated hope.

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But never since the commencement of the French revolution had the affairs of England, of Europe, and of the world, worn so dark an aspect as at this time. The defeats which the Spaniards had sustained were far more disheartening than those of the preceding winter, because they evinced that neither had the armies improved in discipline, nor the government profited by experience. It was but too plain, that, notwithstanding the show of resistance made at the Sierra Morena, the kingdoms of Andalusia were in fact open to the enemy; so supine was the Central Junta, as to make it even probable that Cadiz itself might be betrayed or surprised; and if, now that Buonaparte had no other object, he should march a great force against the English in Portugal, there were few persons who had sufficient knowledge of

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*Lord Wel-  
lington's  
views with  
regard to  
Portugal.*

the country, and of the character of the people, to look onward without dismay.

Lord Wellington calculated upon both. He knew that man is naturally brave, that the men of any country therefore may, with good training, be made good soldiers, and that if the Spanish troops were no longer what they had been under the Prince of Parma, the fault was not in the materials, but in the composition of their armies. The Portugueze were as proud a people as the Spaniards, and had in their history as much cause for pride; but they were not so impracticable. The removal of their court removed all those intrigues and jealousies which would otherwise have been at work; the nation felt itself at this time dependent upon England; but there was no humiliation in this; any such sentiment was precluded by old alliance, the confidence of hereditary attachment, and the consciousness that it was willing and able to do its own part in its own defence. Whatever measures the British government advanced were cordially adopted; and Lord Wellington, during the mortifying inaction to which he was reduced, had the satisfaction of knowing that the Portugueze troops were every day improving in military habits and feelings, and that he might reckon upon them in the next campaign as an efficient force. In all his views and opinions concerning the course to be pursued, Marquis Wellesley entirely agreed with him; and the Marquis, when he returned to England to take his place in administration, proposed that every effort should be made for placing Portugal in the best state of preparation. He knew that we might rely upon the Spaniards for perseverance through all reverses and under every disadvantage; but it was on the Portugueze that we must place our trust for regular and effectual co-operation.

*The King's  
speech.*

When parliament assembled this was referred to in the king's



speech. "The efforts," it was said, "of Great Britain, for the protection of Portugal, had been powerfully aided by the confidence which the Prince Regent had reposed in his majesty, and by the co-operation of the local government, and of the people of that country. The expulsion of the French from that kingdom, and the glorious victory of Talavera, had contributed to check the progress of the enemy. The Spanish government had now, in the name and by the authority of Ferdinand VII., determined to assemble the general and extraordinary Cortes of the nation. This measure, his majesty trusted, would give fresh animation and vigour to the councils and the arms of Spain, and successfully direct the energies and spirit of the Spanish people to the maintenance of the legitimate monarchy, and to the ultimate deliverance of their country. The most important considerations of policy and of good faith required, that as long as this great cause could be maintained with a prospect of success, it should be supported, according to the nature and circumstances of the contest, by the strenuous and continued assistance of the power and resources of Great Britain."

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In the debates which ensued it was a melancholy thing to see how strongly the spirit of opposition manifested itself even in those persons whose opinions and feelings regarding the justice and necessity of the war were in entire sympathy with the government. Earl St. Vincent inveighed in the strongest terms against the ministers, to whose ignorance and incapacity, to whose weakness, infatuation, and stupidity, he said, all our disasters and disgrace were owing. After panegyricizing Sir John Moore as one of the ablest men who ever commanded an army, he spoke of the battle of Talavera as a victory which had been purchased with the useless expenditure of our best blood, which led to no advantage, and which had had all the consequences of defeat. "It is high time," said he, "that parliament should adopt

*Speech of  
Earl St.  
Vincent;*

CHAP. strong measures, or the voice of the country will resound like  
 XXVII. thunder in their ears. Any body may be a minister now: they  
 } pop in, and they pop out, like the man and woman in a peasant's  
 1810. barometer; they rise up like tadpoles; they may be compared  
January. to wasps, to hornets, to locusts; they send forth their pestilential  
 breath over the whole country, and nip and destroy every fair  
 flower in the land. The conduct of his majesty's government  
 has led to the most frightful disasters, which are nowhere ex-  
 ceeded in the annals of history. The country is in that state  
 which makes peace inevitable; it will be compelled to make  
 peace, however disadvantageous, because it will be unable to  
 maintain a war so shamefully misconducted and so disastrous in  
 its consequences."

Lord Gren-  
 ville;

Lord Grenville spake in a similar temper. The day must  
 come, he said, when ministers would have to render an account  
 to parliament of the treasures which they had wasted, and the  
 lives which they had sacrificed. Their measures had uniformly  
 failed, and presented nothing but an unbroken series of dis-  
 graceful, irremediable failures. And yet they had the confidence,  
 the unblushing confidence, to tell us of a victory! Gilded dis-  
 asters were called splendid victories, and the cypress that droops  
 over the tombs of our gallant defenders, whose lives have been  
 uselessly sacrificed, was to be denominated blooming laurels! He  
 spake of what might have been done if an army had been sent  
 either to Trieste or to the north of Germany; condemned the Wal-  
 cheren expedition, as the plan and execution of that miserable  
 enterprise deserved, and pronounced a condemnation not less  
 unqualified upon the plans which had been pursued in Spain,  
 where, he said, they had persisted in expecting co-operation  
 from an armed peasantry, persevering in error after the absurdity  
 of such an expectation had been proved. Why too had the  
 army in that country been exposed in unhealthy situations? But